

# County of Allegheny

## Office of the Controller

Performance Audit Report on  
Staffing at the Allegheny County Jail  
For the Period  
January 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022

August 28, 2023

**Corey O'Connor**  
Controller

104 County Courthouse  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone: (412) 350-4660  
Fax: (412) 350-3006

E-mail: [Controller@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Controller@alleghenycounty.us)

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# Contents

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Letter	1
I. Introduction	3
II. Objectives, Scope, and Methodologies	6
III. Findings and Recommendations:	
Finding #1: Jail Administration Needs to Adequately Address Correctional Officer Workforce Issues	8
Finding #2: Jail Medical Staffing Challenges are Not Being Adequately Addressed	25
IV. Conclusion	34
<b>Schedule I:</b> Approximation of Required Number of Correctional Officers With Short-Shifts	35
<b>Schedule II:</b> Approximation of Required Number of Correctional Officers Without Short-Shifts	36
Response from the Warden	37



## County of Allegheny Office of the Controller

104 Courthouse 436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2498  
Phone (412) 350-4660 Fax (412) 350-3006



August 28, 2023

Mr. Orlando Harper  
Warden  
Allegheny County Jail  
950 Second Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**Performance Audit Report on**  
**Staffing at the Allegheny County Jail**  
**For the Period January 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022**

Dear Warden Harper:

We conducted a performance audit to evaluate staffing, overtime, and training at the Jail as well as compliance with policies, procedures, and regulations. Our procedures were applied to the period from January 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022. However, we reviewed certain data and records through December 31, 2022. Our performance audit was performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

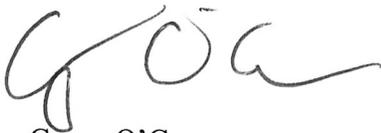
The results of our procedures revealed that there are not enough correctional officers available to work regular time at the Jail facility. In addition, call-offs and medical leave further contributed to the amount of overtime correctional officers must work. We also noted numerous vacancies in the healthcare staffing that have not been adequately addressed.

We offer recommendations for how the Allegheny County Jail can reduce overtime for correctional officers and reduce healthcare staffing vacancies. The results of our audit are detailed in the attached report.

Warden Harper  
August 28, 2023

We would like to thank the management and staff of the Allegheny County Jail for their courtesy and cooperation during our audit.

Kind Regards,



Corey O'Connor  
Controller



Lori A. Churilla  
Assistant Deputy Controller, Auditing

cc: Honorable Patrick Catena, President, County Council  
Honorable John Palmiere, Vice-President, County Council  
Honorable Rich Fitzgerald, County Executive, Allegheny County  
Ms. Jennifer M. Liptak, County Manager and Chief of Staff  
Mr. Ken Varhola, Chief of Staff, County Council  
Ms. Sarah Roka, Budget Manager, County Council

# I. Introduction

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The Allegheny County Jail (Jail), built in 1995, is a direct supervision facility in Pittsburgh that books, processes, and detains individuals interacting with various phases of the criminal justice system. The Jail operates 24 hours per day, seven days per week by staffing its correctional officer (CO) workforce on three-shift daily rotations. Though shift times can vary based on position, COs typically work 7-3 (daylight), 3-11 (evening), and 11-7 (midnight) shifts.

The Jail operates as part of Allegheny County and is primarily funded by real estate tax dollars with a budget of \$88.8 million and \$101.3 million for 2021 and 2022 respectively. Pennsylvania statute 61 Pa.C.S. §§ 1721-28 established the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board (Oversight Board), whose administrative powers and duties include the operation and maintenance of the Jail and oversight of the health and safekeeping of incarcerated housed there. The Board consists of nine members and meets at least once a month. The Warden of the Jail is appointed by the Allegheny County Chief Executive, subject to confirmation by the Oversight Board.

The Jail provides for the care, custody, and control of those incarcerated in the facility, and provides services including healthcare, drug and alcohol intervention programs, and outpatient counseling services. Incarcerated are housed in one of 35 housing pods which are located on one of eight floors in the Jail. Most pods are arranged in two tiers of cells and can accommodate double occupancy. Except for the Segregated Housing Units, the Jail staffs the pods with one correctional officer (CO) per pod, on each of three shifts. The population in the Jail fluctuates daily but has decreased from 2021 to 2022 (see the table below).

<b>Jail Incarceree Population by Month</b>		
As of:	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>
January 1st	1,574	1,488
February 1st	1,559	1,520
March 1st	1,609	1,487
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	1,697	1,436
May 1 <sup>st</sup>	1,747	1,484
June 1st	1,760	1,471
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	1,650	1,471
August 1st	1,630	1,469
September 1st	1,654	1,411
October 1st	1,649	1,416
November 1st	1,601	1,354
December 1st	1,591	1,369
<b>Average</b>	<b>1,643</b>	<b>1,448</b>

*Source: Warden's Report from Jail Oversight Board Meeting*

# I. Introduction

## Correctional Officers

While there are various employee positions in the Jail, the majority of its employees work as COs. The COs perform numerous duties including the supervision of all functions in the housing pods, coordination of incarcerated movement in the facility (including to the recreation areas and visitation booths) and transporting/escorting incarcerated. COs are required to complete 40 hours of training each year including CPR certification and gun training (only required for certain COs). The Jail offers various trainings to meet these requirements, including fire and safety training, first aid training, suboxone training, and health training for COs. As of September 30, 2022, there were approximately 377 COs employed at the Jail. The CO pay scale, which is set under union agreement, is shown below (there are yearly increases, however, only certain years are shown).

<b>Correctional Officer Pay Scale</b>			
<b>Years of Service *</b>	<b>7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021</b>	<b>7/1/2021 - 6/30/2022</b>	<b>7/1/2022 - 6/30/2023</b>
Entry	\$ 44,874.75	\$ 45,772.25	\$ 46,916.55
1 Year	\$ 47,772.40	\$ 48,727.85	\$ 49,946.04
18 Months	\$ 48,733.57	\$ 49,708.24	\$ 50,950.95
2 Years	\$ 49,952.45	\$ 50,951.50	\$ 52,225.28
30 Months	\$ 55,484.42	\$ 56,594.10	\$ 58,008.96
3 Years	\$ 57,038.59	\$ 58,179.36	\$ 59,633.85
4 Years	\$ 60,863.50	\$ 62,080.77	\$ 63,632.79
5 Years	\$ 72,336.58	\$ 73,783.31	\$ 75,627.89
10 Years	\$ 73,223.07	\$ 74,687.53	\$ 76,554.72
15 Years	\$ 74,109.36	\$ 75,591.55	\$ 77,481.34
20 Years	\$ 74,996.06	\$ 76,495.99	\$ 78,408.38
25 Years	\$ 75,882.35	\$ 77,400.00	\$ 79,335.00
30 Years	\$ 76,769.06	\$ 78,304.44	\$ 80,262.05

\* Increases are also provided for other years; only certain years are presented in the chart

*Source: Records provided by Jail administration*

The Jail paid more than \$8.9 million in overtime in 2021, and almost \$6.8 million was paid between January through September 2022.

## Medical Staffing

The Jail contracts with Allegheny Health Network (AHN) for provider services which includes doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. The doctors are based on the 5B housing unit, which functions as the Jail's in-house emergency room and hospital. Doctors are to make

## **I. Introduction**

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daily rounds for individuals incarcerated on 5B and respond to sick calls on other housing units as needed. Nurse practitioners and physician assistants provide routine, scheduled care. In addition, AHN provide specialists, such as cardiologists, orthopedists, and obstetrics/gynecologists, who visit the Jail weekly to examine incarcerated individuals at the Jail's clinic.

Non-provider medical personnel are employed by Allegheny County or through temporary staffing agencies. This includes the Assistant Directors of Nursing (ADONs), registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants, and medical assistants.

These personnel work in the clinic, on the housing units, and in the Jail's Intake area. They clear individuals for incarceration, conduct physical assessments after individuals are committed to the facility, and respond to sick calls on the pods and in the Intake area. These personnel can refer the incarcerated individuals to a provider for more advanced care if needed.

Medical services provided at the Jail include dialysis, dental, X-rays, physical therapy, optometry, orthopedic, obstetrics/gynecology, wound care, clinical, and laboratory services. The Jail also has a Behavioral Assessment Unit in which incarcerated individuals can be evaluated to determine if there is a risk of self or other harm, as well as to evaluate if the individual is capable of participating in their own legal defense.

## **II. Objectives, Scope, and Methodology**

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### **Objectives**

Our objectives were:

1. Analyze the staffing for correctional officers at the Jail to determine the extent of CO shortages, why these shortages exist (Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) issues, insufficient base staffing levels, etc.) and how the Jail handles these shortages (overtime, operate short-staffed, etc.).
2. Calculate the number of additional COs needed to achieve the required staffing levels without incurring overtime.
3. Determine whether there are shortages in any other positions hired through the County (this would exclude positions through outside companies).
4. Determine what types of training and staff development opportunities are offered to correctional officers or other employees as deemed necessary.

### **Scope**

Our procedures were performed for the period January 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022. However, we reviewed certain data and records through December 31, 2022. We conducted our audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

### **Methodology**

Methodologies used to accomplish our objectives included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Interviewed Allegheny County Jail personnel to gain an understanding of the processes related to staffing, overtime, and training relevant to our objectives.
- Examined documentation and records provided by the Jail and budget office related to staffing, scheduling, overtime, vacancies in correctional officer and healthcare positions, employee separations from the County, the use of buddy days, and training.

## II. Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

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- Analyzed payroll records provided by Controller’s Office JDE personnel for Allegheny County Jail employees.
  - We noted that the payroll records include payment for items such as sick and vacation pay buy back/payouts, travel, uniforms, and settlements. While these items are related to employment, they are not unique hours/pay that relate directly to the time an employee worked (or was off). Therefore, we excluded them when calculating total pay and total hours. Base pay was calculated by subtracting payments for overtime from total pay.
  - Since the Jail operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, COs do not receive County holidays off or personal days. Instead, they receive additional vacation time which the Jail refers to as vacation/holidays. For our summaries, we included vacation/holiday days as vacation days.
- Performed testing for a sample of records related to scheduling, overtime, employee separations, and buddy days (buddy days allow COs to exchange shifts for greater flexibility in their work schedule). Samples for scheduling and buddy days were haphazardly selected, the sample month for healthcare positions for vacancy testing was judgmentally selected, and the sample for resignation letter testing was randomly selected.
- Reviewed and analyzed various healthcare staffing records and reports (monthly schedules, daily assignment sheets for each shift, overtime and dock records, and call-offs/on sheets, etc.) provided by the Jail as well as invoices from the temporary staffing agencies to determine the number of shifts worked by agency personnel and by County employee overtime for each budgeted healthcare position for the month of December 2022.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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***Finding #1***

**Jail Administration Needs to Adequately Address  
Correctional Officers’ Workforce Issues**

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**Criteria:** The backbone of a Jail is its workforce. The Jail’s operations are heavily dependent on deploying its available workforce appropriately, effectively, and economically.

The Jail operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and requires correctional officer (CO) positions to be continuously staffed. The COs work week is Sunday through Saturday with three 8-hour shifts each day. Each shift, COs are assigned to numerous posts (designated area that a correction officer is assigned) throughout the Jail. Most of these posts are required to be staffed each shift to maintain safety and security. When post planning is done incorrectly, managers find themselves battling excessive overtime, dissent among staff, job dissatisfaction, and resignations.

**Condition:** We reviewed payroll records as well as documents provided by the Jail (detailed below) to analyze CO staffing, overtime, scheduling, use of leave, staff turnover and vacancies.

**Overtime Issues**

If the Jail does not have sufficient COs available to staff each post, it mandates or forces overtime for COs already working a shift to ensure appropriate staffing levels are achieved.

Based on payroll records, more than \$8.9 million was paid to COs for overtime in 2021 and almost \$6.8 million was paid between January and September 2022. Overtime accounted for approximately 26% of total pay to COs in both years.

<b>Correctional Officers Pay Overtime versus Base Pay</b>		
	Year Ended 2021	January-September 2022
CO Overtime Pay	\$ 8,905,310	\$ 6,788,884
CO Base Pay	<u>25,232,979</u>	<u>18,168,656</u>
Total Pay	<u>\$ 34,138,289</u>	<u>\$ 24,957,540</u>
Overtime %	26%	27%

*Source: Allegheny County JDE records*

### III. Findings and Recommendations

We also analyzed these records to find the top 10 COs with the highest overtime paid in 2021 and January through September 2022. We found the top 10 correctional officers were paid between 83% and 160% of their base pay in overtime.

Overall, for 2021, 10 (2%) of the 441 COs that were paid overtime earned more in overtime than their base salary. For the period January 1 through September 30, 2022, 8 (2%) of the 400 COs that were paid overtime earned more in overtime than their actual salary.

<b>Top Ten COs with Highest Paid Overtime for 2021</b>					
	<b>'Base' Pay</b>	<b>Overtime Pay</b>	<b>OT % of Base Pay</b>	<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>OT Hours</b>
1	\$ 74,953	\$ 106,813	142.5%	\$ 181,766	1,997
2	69,657	102,564	147.2%	172,221	1,833
3	76,723	96,116	125.3%	172,838	1,731
4	77,368	86,417	111.7%	163,786	1,561
5	53,470	85,525	159.9%	138,996	1,543
6	78,069	77,901	99.8%	155,970	1,377
7	77,090	76,931	99.8%	154,021	1,366
8	78,229	76,336	97.6%	154,565	1,379
9	76,359	73,972	96.9%	150,331	1,333
10	77,354	71,724	92.7%	149,078	1,285

*Source: Allegheny County JDE records*

<b>Top Ten COs with Highest Paid Overtime for January 1, through September 30, 2022</b>					
	<b>'Base' Pay</b>	<b>Overtime Pay</b>	<b>OT % of Base Pay</b>	<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>OT Hours</b>
1	\$ 59,882	\$ 73,850	123.3%	\$ 133,733	1,324
2	59,768	70,052	117.2%	129,820	1,252
3	60,266	65,783	109.2%	126,049	1,164
4	59,876	60,230	100.6%	120,106	1,073
5	60,259	58,834	97.6%	119,093	1,042
6	59,587	57,730	96.9%	117,317	1,035
7	59,361	56,035	94.4%	115,396	1,002
8	59,427	55,290	93.0%	114,717	1,027
9	58,523	55,216	94.3%	113,738	999
10	61,534	51,208	83.2%	112,742	903

*Source: Allegheny County JDE records*

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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We also calculated the number of overtime hours paid to each CO during 2021 and grouped the COs into ranges based on the total overtime hours paid during the year.

Based on this analysis, 441 COs were paid overtime in 2021, of which 36 (8%) of them were paid for more than 24 weeks (nearly six months) of overtime during 2021. Out of these 36 COs, we found that the CO with the most overtime was paid for 1,997 overtime hours for a total of \$106,813 in overtime in 2021. When compared to a work year of 2,080 hours this CO was paid an additional 96% in overtime hours. On average, this CO worked his 40-hour regular work week plus an additional 38 hours in overtime each week of the year.

<b>Overtime Hours Paid to COs in 2021 Grouped by Total Overtime Hours Paid</b>					
	OT Hours Paid Per CO	# of COs	%	OT Hours Paid	OT Amount Paid
1 Week and under	40 Hours and Under	43	10%	572	\$ 29,830
1 to 4 Weeks	40.25 to 160 Hours	87	20%	7,719	\$ 372,124
4 to 12 Weeks	160.25 to 480 Hours	148	33%	47,464	\$ 2,247,923
12 to 24 Weeks	480.25 to 960 Hours	127	29%	87,199	\$ 3,992,955
More than 24 Weeks	More than 960 Hours	36	8%	44,192	\$ 2,262,478
Total for 2021		441	100%	187,146	\$ 8,905,310
<i>Source Allegheny County JDE records</i>					

Overtime at the Jail is a decades-long, vicious cycle that has not been effectively addressed resulting in cyclical burnout, stress, and turnover amongst COs. These long hours are a major contributor to CO fatigue, stress, poor health, and high turnover.

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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#### **Scheduling**

Although the Jail utilizes an electronic system to track time and attendance for its employees, the scheduling of COs for each post on each shift is done manually. Some of the posts remain the same every day for each shift, however, there are numerous posts that vary based on the shift, day of the week, or needs of the Jail. Since the Jail maintains a transient population, its operational responsibilities require continuous planning and organization. Therefore, the actual number of CO posts needed continuously changes, making the scheduling process challenging.

The Jail uses the following documents as part of its CO scheduling process:

- Weekly Schedules – An Excel file that lists the COs available each day as well as COs that are on vacation for the week or unavailable for another reason.
- Roll Call Book – An Excel file listing all posts needed for each shift (the specific posts change based on the needs of the Jail). The Sergeant/Captain assigns COs to each post based on the weekly schedule and enters their names into the electronic file. The Roll Call Book is printed for each shift and numerous changes and updates are handwritten on it. For example, COs that call off or work overtime are handwritten on the Roll Call Book.
- Call-Offs/On Sheet – A handwritten sheet that is used to record all Jail employees, including COs, that called off for their shift and the reason they called off.
- Overtime & Dock Record – An Excel file that is used to track various information including voluntary, forced, and refused overtime hours as well as COs that took down their offer to work overtime, called off, or were docked. Entries are initially made in the electronic file; however, the record is printed, and manual changes and updates can be made.
- Overtime Equalization spreadsheet – A real-time spreadsheet that tracks overtime hours worked and seniority for each CO. It is used to determine the order of COs when forcing overtime.
- Overtime Sign Up sheet – A handwritten document that is used for COs to sign up to work overtime.

The manual process used for scheduling is time consuming and can lead to errors, which results in the need for additional time to reconcile the numerous documents used throughout the process. For example, during our testing, we had to review the Roll Call Book, Call-Offs/On Sheet and the Overtime & Dock Records to determine the number of CO call-offs for each shift. During our review of these records, we noted instances where a CO was listed on one document but not another. In an increasing digital world,

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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technology is needed to address understaffing and scheduling to better manage the Jail workforce and to be able to predict fluctuating staffing needs.

#### **Overtime for Correctional Officers was Necessary Before any Call-Offs Occurred**

Our analysis reviewed that the root cause of the majority of the excessive overtime is that there are not enough COs available to work regular time at the Jail. This same concern was identified in a previous report issued by the Controller's Office in 2010.

We reviewed the scheduling reports identified above to analyze the CO scheduling for each of the three daily shifts for a sample of two weeks plus four additional days (a total of 18 days). During our review of the scheduling process, we noted that in addition to the regular full-time posts, the Jail also has posts that are not needed for the entire 8-hour shift, so they are only scheduled for five to six hours (short-shifts). These short-shifts are not typically assigned to officers working a regular full-time shift, instead they are included with the overtime needed for the shift, therefore they are referred to as OT short-shifts.

We compiled the information from the scheduling reports for each shift to determine the following:

- CO posts short for the day before call-offs  
(Number of COs needed minus COs available before call-offs)
- CO posts short for the day after call-off  
(Number of COs short before call-offs plus the number of call-offs)
- Total COs needed for overtime  
(Number of COs short after call-offs plus the number of overtime short-shifts needed)

### III. Findings and Recommendations

Date	Number of Correctional Officers per Day (Three Shifts per Day)						
	Full 8-Hour Shifts					Overtime Short-Shifts Needed	Total Overtime Posts Needed
	CO Posts Needed	COs Available Before Call-Offs	CO Posts Short Before Call-Offs	CO Call-Offs	CO Posts Short After Call-Offs		
<b><u>2021</u></b>							
February 14	232	197	<b>35</b>	27	<b>62</b>	24	<b>86</b>
February 15	284	242	<b>42</b>	30	<b>72</b>	24	<b>96</b>
February 16	273	259	<b>14</b>	41	<b>55</b>	27	<b>82</b>
February 17	273	248	<b>25</b>	20	<b>45</b>	27	<b>72</b>
February 18	269	240	<b>29</b>	21	<b>50</b>	27	<b>77</b>
February 19	269	237	<b>32</b>	21	<b>53</b>	29	<b>82</b>
February 20	222	199	<b>23</b>	25	<b>48</b>	24	<b>72</b>
March 16	266	235	<b>31</b>	23	<b>54</b>	28	<b>82</b>
March 24	271	253	<b>18</b>	28	<b>46</b>	25	<b>71</b>
<b><u>2022</u></b>							
April 10	227	188	<b>39</b>	29	<b>68</b>	16	<b>84</b>
April 23	214	192	<b>22</b>	38	<b>60</b>	18	<b>78</b>
September 18	225	198	<b>27</b>	22	<b>49</b>	17	<b>66</b>
September 19	244	224	<b>20</b>	11	<b>31</b>	23	<b>54</b>
September 20	258	222	<b>36</b>	7	<b>43</b>	21	<b>64</b>
September 21	256	223	<b>33</b>	11	<b>44</b>	20	<b>64</b>
September 22	249	215	<b>34</b>	19	<b>53</b>	19	<b>72</b>
September 23	250	202	<b>48</b>	11	<b>59</b>	24	<b>83</b>
September 24	221	184	<b>37</b>	20	<b>57</b>	18	<b>75</b>

Source: Records provided by Jail administration

Upon further analysis of the data above, we noted the following for the 18 days tested:

- Before call-offs even occurred, the Jail was short COs and did not have enough COs available to fill all the necessary posts for any of the 18 days tested (100%).
- Before call-offs, the Jail was short an average of 30 CO posts per day (a range of 14 to 48 posts).
- There was an average of 22 call-offs per day (a range of 7 to 41 call-offs).

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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- The average number of COs available after call-offs is 197 COs per day.
- After call-offs, the shortage increased to an average of 53 CO posts (a range of 31 to 72 posts) per day.
- After the number of necessary short shifts are added to the shortage, the average total number of overtime posts needed increases to 76 (a range of 54 to 96 posts) per day.
- Based on this information, an average of 38% of the COs are needed to work overtime every day (average 76 overtime posts per day / average 197 COs available per day).

#### **Voluntary and Forced Overtime**

These shortages, including the OT short-shifts, are filled by COs who are not scheduled for that particular shift, to work overtime.

Overtime can be voluntary or forced. COs can volunteer for overtime shifts, which is recorded on the overtime sign-up sheet, before or after a scheduled shift or on their pass days. The Jail also maintains a force list to track the order in which officers will be forced to work overtime (based on how many times a CO has been forced to work overtime and their seniority). Only COs currently working can be forced to work overtime.

When overtime posts are needed for a shift, the desk sergeant or captain begins calling the COs on the volunteer list. At this point the CO can ‘take down’ their offer to volunteer for overtime. This often occurs if an officer is high on the force list because if they are forced to work the shift instead of volunteering, they drop to the bottom of the force list.

If the names on the volunteer list are exhausted, and there are still unfilled posts, the Jail will begin to force COs already working to stay for mandatory overtime. If COs refuse to work forced overtime, there can be disciplinary action for refusing to work. However, if the CO refuses overtime due to approved Family Medical Leave or ADA Leave (see “Medical Related Leave” below for additional information) that restricts the amount of overtime they can work, they will not be disciplined.

The Jail uses the Overtime Equalization Spreadsheet to track details related to overtime hours for each CO on a daily basis. The file includes the number of hours of forced overtime worked, voluntary overtime worked, forced overtime hours refused (regardless of reason), and overtime hours ‘taken down’.

We reviewed the scheduling records referenced above and found the following related to the overtime posts for the 18 days tested. Based on the

### III. Findings and Recommendations

chart below, it looks like there were more overtime posts filled than needed for two of the 18 days. However, according to the Jail, they do not have more COs work overtime than necessary. There are various reasons the data could show an ‘overage’. For example, on September 19, 2022, there was a special circumstance that required three COs that were not currently in the Jail to be called in to work overtime. The posts were not documented on the Roll Call Book as needed posts, but the COs were included in the number of overtime posts filled. Furthermore, since scheduling is a manual process that involves numerous documents (see above), there can also be errors in the records.

Date	Number of Correctional Officer Overtime Posts per Day (Three Shift per Day)					OT Posts Not Filled
	OT Posts Needed	# COs Refused Forced OT	OT Posts Filled		Total	
			Voluntary	Forced		
<b><u>2021</u></b>						
February 14	86	47	10	51	61	25
February 15	96	53	26	53	79	17
February 16	82	54	17	62	79	3
February 17	72	49	26	47	73	(1)*
February 18	77	42	30	33	63	14
February 19	82	54	36	35	71	11
February 20	72	38	25	45	70	2
March 16	82	52	39	38	77	5
March 24	71	48	25	41	66	5
<b><u>2022</u></b>						
April 10	84	64	11	57	68	16
April 23	78	57	3	60	63	15
September 18	66	32	26	37	63	3
September 19	54	22	44	14	58	(4)*
September 20	64	27	35	23	58	6
September 21	64	54	36	28	64	0
September 22	72	28	48	20	68	4
September 23	83	54	39	43	82	1
September 24	75	44	28	43	71	4

\* According to the Jail, they do not have COs work more overtime than necessary. There are various reasons the data could show an ‘overage’

Source: Records provided by Jail administration

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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Further analysis of the data above shows:

- An average of 28 COs volunteered to work overtime each day.
- An average of 41 COs were forced to work overtime each day.
- An average of 46 COs refused to work overtime each day.
- An average of 7 overtime posts were not filled.

As previously discussed, COs can refuse to work overtime without disciplinary action if they have the appropriate FMLA documentation. While some may argue that COs refusing to work overtime due to their FMLA status increases the overtime issues, it could also be argued that COs obtain the necessary FMLA status so they cannot be consistently forced to work mandatory overtime or face disciplinary action if they do refuse.

#### **Medical Related Leave**

There are four general types of medical related leave (Family Medical Leave, Americans with Disabilities Act, Workers' Compensation, and Medical Leave) used by COs when they cannot work for a medical related reason. Each leave type has its own rules and restrictions.

Under FMLA, eligible employees are entitled to take 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons. Although the leave is unpaid, the employer can allow or force the employee to use paid time off (vacation days, sick days, etc.) while on leave. Employees may take FMLA leave in a block of time (e.g., four weeks), intermittently (if medically necessary), or via a reduced schedule (reduced daily or weekly work schedule).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that protects the rights of people with disabilities by eliminating barriers to their participation in many aspects of working and living. When necessary, the Act requires employers to make reasonable accommodations, depending on individual circumstances, for qualified employees with disabilities to perform essential job functions or to benefit from the same opportunities and rights afforded to employees without disabilities. This can include modifications to work schedules, such as leave (although the Act does not specifically require employers to provide medical or disability-related leave). Accommodations should generally be granted unless they would result in an undue hardship to the employer (meaning the accommodation would be too difficult or too expensive to provide), so a set leave period is not mandated by the Act.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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Workers' Compensation is governed by the Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Act and provides benefits, including payment for medical treatment and reimbursement for lost wages, to employees who are injured or become ill as a direct result of performing their job. Employees may also be offered modified duty while medical treatment continues.

Allegheny County may also allow an employee time off from work without pay (for up to a year) for their own extended sickness or other non-recurring health condition. Employees are required to use paid time off before unpaid time starts. Intermittent leave and reduced work schedules are not permitted under the County Medical Leave of Absence.

#### *Payroll Records and Time Used*

When COs use paid time off, including sick and vacation days (which includes regular vacation days and vacation days given in lieu of holidays), for time not worked, it is recorded in the County's accounting system (JDE) based on the type of time used and the type of leave used. COs must exhaust any available paid time off before moving to unpaid leave. Although Workers' Compensation is paid (it is a separate check and is not included as wages), an employee's paid time off is not used, so we included the hours with the unpaid hours.

We analyzed these JDE payroll records to calculate the total number of COs in the records as well as the number that used some type of paid or unpaid medical related leave (we did not include the time paid under County Paid Parental Leave) during our audit period.

Based on these payroll records, we found there were:

- 488 COs in the payroll records for pay dates in calendar year 2021
- 451 COs in the payroll records for pay dates between January and September 2022

Using the same records, we found some type of medical related leave (paid or unpaid) was used by:

- 313 COs (64%) during 2021 pay dates, and by
- 252 COs (56%) during pay dates between January and September 2022.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

<b>Hours Recorded in County JDE Records for Correctional Officer Medical Related Leave</b>		
	January to December 2021	January to September 2022
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b><u>Paid Time Off</u></b>		
FMLA – Sick	3,733	2,215
FMLA – Vacation	12,801	11,016
ADA & Medical – Sick	1,458	697
ADA & Medical – Vacation	<u>4,426</u>	<u>2,663</u>
Total Hours (Paid Time Off)	22,418	16,591
<b><u>Unpaid Leave &amp; Workers’ Compensation</u></b>		
FMLA, ADA, & Medical	39,349	16,782
Worker’s Compensation	<u>15,904</u>	<u>15,600</u>
Total Hours (Unpaid & Workers’ Comp.)	55,253	32,382
 Total Hours	 <u>77,671</u>	 <u>48,973</u>
 <b>Total number of employees on some type of medical related leave (paid or unpaid)</b>	 <b>313</b>	 <b>252</b>
<i>Source: Allegheny County JDE records</i>		

Although COs are eligible to take time off under these medical related leaves (as documented above, over half of the COs used some type of medical related leave), the Jail must still cover the shifts they were required to work, which can significantly impact the staffing schedule. There are numerous factors surrounding scheduling to cover medical related leave. For instance, some COs plan for an extended period off, some are off unexpectedly for an extended period, while others call off on an intermittent basis.

It could be argued that COs using paid time off for their leave would have used that time during the year anyway (especially vacation time which must be used each year), regardless of a medical need. As a result, these hours should already be factored into the budgeted number of CO positions. Therefore, we compared the hours for unpaid time off for medical related leave and Workers’ Compensation to total overtime hours paid to determine the effect these types of leave have on the overtime hours paid.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

<b>Unpaid Medical Related Leave and Worker’s Compensation Hours Compared to Total Overtime Hours</b>		
	January to December 2021	January to September 2022
Unpaid Hours	55,253	32,382
Total Overtime Hours	187,146	141,921
% of Unpaid Hours to Overtime Hours	30%	23%

*Source: Allegheny County JDE records*

#### **Vacancies**

The captain evaluates the Roll Call Book every shift to determine which posts are needed based on the facility operations for that day and shift. As discussed above, the number of COs needed can change every shift, and the Jail can adjust the number of budgeted CO positions throughout the year. Furthermore, the number of vacant positions (budgeted positions that are not filled) can change frequently due to the resignations, terminations, retirements, transfers, etc.

Since these figures frequently change, we requested the information as of December 31<sup>st</sup> each year. The Allegheny County Budget Office was able to provide the total number of budgeted CO positions, as well and the number positions filled and vacant, for the dates listed below.

	Filled	Vacant	Total	%
	Positions	Positions	Budgeted Positions	Vacant
December 14, 2020	431	17	448	4%
December 13, 2021	409	39	448	9%
December 6, 2022	374	112	486	23%

*Source: Allegheny County Budget Office (for Correctional Officer Positions)*

Although the number of budgeted CO positions increased by 38 (8%) from 2021 to 2022, the percentage of vacant position increased from 9% to 23% for the same period. Based on this information, it appears that vacant (unfilled) positions are a substantial factor contributing to the shortages identified above.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

#### Length of Service for Resigned Correction Officers

We reviewed the Termination of Service Tracker (TOS Tracker) maintained by the Jail to track the paperwork process when an employee separates from service for any reason (resignation, termination, retirement, or death). There were 151 COs and CO Cadets that separated service during our audit period of January 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

Reason	January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021	January 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022	Total
Resignation	39	27	66
Termination	24	16	40
Retirement	29	13	42
Death	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>151</b>

*Source: Records provided by Jail administration for Correctional Officer and Cadets*

We reviewed the Jail’s records as well as JDE payroll records for the 66 COs that resigned and the 41 COs that were terminated (one of the 40 COs was terminated, rehired, and terminated a second time during our audit period, so they are included twice) to determine the COs’ hire date and separation date in order to calculate their length of employment. See the chart below for a summary.

<b>Approximate Length of Time COs were Employed Before Resignation or Termination (January 2021 – September 2022)</b>				
	<b>COs Resigned</b>		<b>COs Terminated</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Under 1 month	5	7%	3	7%
1 - 3 months	13	20%	6	15%
3 - 6 months	11	17%	2	5%
6 months - 1 year	10	15%	2	5%
1 - 3 years	11	17%	7	17%
3 - 5 years	7	11%	4	10%
5 - 10 years	5	7%	5	12%
10+ years	<u>4</u>	<u>6%</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>29%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>66</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>100%</u>

*Source: Records provided by Jail administration and Allegheny County JDE records*

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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Based on the information provided, 59% of the COs that resigned and 32% of the COs that were terminated during our audit period were employed for one year or less.

We reviewed a sample of resignation letters, which are required to document the last day of work, and exit forms, which are voluntary, from COs that left between January 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022.

We reviewed five out of 66 resignation letters and found the following: three COs did not provide a reason for their resignation, one resigned because they could not work the required hours, and one was dissatisfied with the administration.

We also reviewed the 13 exit forms provided by the Jail. The forms contain a section listing 15 reasons why the employee is leaving and directs the employee to select all reasons contributing to their decision to leave.

<b>Reasons COs Left Employment at the Jail Based on Exit Forms Completed by the CO</b>	
<b><u>Reason</u></b>	<b><u># COs</u></b>
Work Hours	10
Dissatisfied with Management	7
Family Responsibilities	6
Health Concerns	5
Personal	4
Advancement Opportunities	4
Better Job Opportunities	2
Relationship with Co-Workers	1
Further Education	1
Joined Military	1
Better Benefits	2
Salary	0
Job Eliminated	0
Relocation	0
Other	11

*Source: Records provided by Jail administration*

Based on the above information, work hours are the top reason related to COs leaving employment at the Jail with 10 of 13 COs (77%) indicating this contributed to their decision to leave. COs also wrote down other reasons for leaving such as: excessive forced overtime / work-life balance

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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(10 COs), issues related to mental and physical health caused by working at the jail (8 COs), and a hostile / toxic work environment (6 COs).

#### **Additional COs Needed**

We calculated a high-level approximation of the number of COs required on an annual basis using estimated figures provided by the Jail (see Schedules I and II on pages 35 and 36). Our calculation only includes an allowance for paid time off (sick and vacation days) used by COs and does not factor in any additional medical leave, administrative leave, unexcused leave, military leave, etc.

To accurately determine the number of required COs, the Jail must first determine the number of posts that need to be filled each day. As discussed above, the actual number of necessary CO posts continuously changes based on the needs of the Jail. Therefore, the figures provided are only an estimate. Since the Jail's scheduling records are manual, we could not analyze actual fluctuations in the number of COs needed each day, therefore our calculations are based on the estimates provided by the Jail. To perform a more detailed analysis, the Jail would need to electronically track, and conduct a trend analysis of, the necessary number of CO posts, as well as the number of COs available, by day of the week and by shift.

Furthermore, the Jail has posts that are not needed for the entire 8-hour shift, so they are only scheduled for five to six hours (referred to as short-shifts). Currently, the Jail typically fills these shifts with overtime. However, to calculate the number of COs required to reduce overtime to minimal levels, these shifts were included as full-time, 8-hour shifts in our schedule.

Based on our approximation, the Jail would need 504 COs to fill the needed positions. If the Jail would continue to fill the short-shifts with overtime, instead of hiring full-time COs for these shifts, this would reduce this number to 468 COs. Approximately 39,000 hours of overtime would be required for these short-shifts, or 83 overtime hours per CO (based on 468 COs). As of December 6, 2022, the Jail had 486 budgeted CO positions, and 112 positions were vacant.

**Cause:**

There are numerous factors that contribute to the extensive overtime at the Jail. Based on the data on page 13, the Jail was short an average of 30 COs per day before call-offs even occurred, suggesting the Jail does not have enough COs on staff to fill the necessary posts. Call-offs increase the estimated shortage to an average of 53 COs per day.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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While a portion of overtime hours can be attributed to COs on a medical related leave, this does not account for all overtime hours. As of December 2021, 9% of the CO positions were vacant, the Jail increased the number of positions for 2022, but was not able to fill all positions, and the vacancies increased to 23%.

**Effect:**

Given the number of COs scheduled every shift, call-offs can be expected and should be considered when determining the number of budgeted CO positions and the scheduling of existing COs. Staff shortages result in COs volunteering or being forced into working overtime on a daily basis. Overtime accounted for approximately 26% of payments to COs in 2021, and 27% between January and September 2022. It can be argued that the extensive amount of mandatory overtime leads to turnover in CO staff, which necessitates additional overtime.

**Recommendations:** We recommend that the Jail management:

- Work to implement an electronic scheduling system that can track historical data and trends, especially related to the number of call-offs and the number of positions short each day. Staffing requirements should include an allowance for scheduled time off, call-offs, as well as other anticipated leaves based on this historical analysis in order to minimize the number of posts that must be staffed with overtime.
- Given the decreasing population of the Jail, conduct an overall analysis (separate from the daily review) to re-evaluate the Roll Call Book and CO posts. Determine if all posts are required for every shift or if restructuring is necessary. The analysis should be conducted on an ongoing basis due to changes in population and operations.
- Immediately focus on recruiting new COs to address the overtime issues and break the cycle of mandatory overtime. This could include advertising in newspapers and on billboards in other counties.
- Adopt a model which offers more flexibility for the COs as well as input into decisions that affect their work experience. This could include enrichment opportunities and classes that focus on issues identified by COs, such as stress management or other wellness programs.

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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- Work with the union and current COs to identify incentives that will attract new hires and increase morale to help retain staff. For example, consider offering a hiring bonus, re-evaluating pay scales and the timing of pay increases in order to provide higher pay to entry level COs, or offering more extensive/varied training.
- Use the suggestions, if appropriate, provided through exit forms when developing changes to improve working conditions and increase morale. The exit interview process and related forms could be expanded to obtain more specific or relevant information.

**Management's  
Response:**

The Warden's response begins on page 37.

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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***Finding #2***  
**Jail Medical Staffing Challenges are  
Not Being Adequately Addressed**

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**Criteria:**

The Jail provides healthcare in the facility to ensure incarcerated individuals have access to care to meet their medical, dental, and mental health needs. Certain advanced practitioners (those that can prescribe medications), such as physicians and psychiatrists are Allegheny Health Network (AHN) employees, while other healthcare staff such as registered nurses and mental health specialists are Allegheny County employees. The Jail also contracts with temporary staffing agencies to help fill in for vacancies of certain healthcare staff positions. It is the Jail's responsibility to ensure that the incarcerated individuals are provided with medically necessary healthcare. Therefore, the Jail should be adequately staffed to ensure that the incarcerated individuals are receiving adequate healthcare.

The County Jail Oversight Board is a continuation of the County Prison Board originally established under the "Second Class County Prison Board Act" of December 10, 1980 (P.L. 1152 (No. 208)). This Board ensures discipline and safekeeping of prisoners and proper management of the County Jail. The Jail Oversight Board meets once a month, and the Warden delivers his report to the Board which provides various information and statistics related to the Jail's operations and programs. At times, the Warden's Report includes a list of healthcare position vacancies.

**Condition:**

The healthcare staff at the Jail is comprised of County employees, individuals contracted through Allegheny Health Network (AHN), and temporary staffing agencies. Allegheny County employs individuals in 38 various County healthcare job titles, including 12 full-time union jobs, seven part-time union jobs, and 19 full-time non-union jobs (see the chart on pages 28 through 30 for a list of these job titles). The scope of this report only includes County employees and temporary agency employees used to cover County vacancies.

**County Healthcare Vacancies**

We analyzed the change in the number of vacancies for each of the 38 County job titles throughout 2022 using records and information provided by the Jail. The current Jail healthcare administration was not involved with tracking healthcare vacancies prior to April 2022, so we used April 2022 as the starting point for our analysis. Jail healthcare administration provided records detailing the employees that were hired or separated service during

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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2022, information on employees that transferred into or out of positions, and the number of filled and vacant positions as of December 31, 2022. We also reviewed healthcare vacancies identified on the Warden’s Report for April 2022 and December 2022. The information on the vacancies for each County job title is shown in the chart on pages 28 to 30.

The Jail contracts with three external temporary agencies to help cover vacancies in certain healthcare jobs. During calendar year 2022, the Jail paid over \$2 million to these three agencies as noted below:

Maxim Healthcare Staffing Services	\$1,325,285
Reliant Staffing LLC	669,679
Medical Staffing Network/Cross-Country Allied	<u>49,109</u>
Total	\$2,044,073

The vacancies identified in the Warden’s Report are not adjusted to include coverage provided by these agencies or overtime worked by County employees. Therefore, we reviewed scheduling records provided by the Jail, as well as invoices from the temporary agencies, to calculate the number of shifts worked for each position for the month of December 2022. The number of shifts worked was converted to the number of full-time equivalent positions covered by agency personnel and County overtime. An adjustment for the number of equivalent positions covered during December 2022, as well as the adjusted number of filled and vacant positions, was added to the chart on pages 28 to 30.

Overall, our analysis shows the Jail budgeted a total of 146 healthcare positions in the 38 job titles. As of April 2022, 82 (56%) positions were vacant. During the year, 19 employees were hired or transferred into their position, and 21 employees left or transferred out of their position, resulting in a total of 84 (58%) vacant positions as of December 2022. However, agency employees and County employee overtime covered the equivalent of approximately 20 full-time positions in December 2022, reducing the adjusted number to 64 (44%) vacant positions as of December 2022. The 44% vacancy rate shows the Jail is grossly understaffed.

Even after adjusting for agency employees and County overtime, we still noted the following concerns for the 38 healthcare position titles. As of December 2022:

- Ten of the 12 (83%) full-time union healthcare job titles had vacancies ranging from two to eight budgeted positions.
- Six of the seven (86%) part-time union healthcare job titles had vacancies ranging from one to four budgeted positions.

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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- Ten of the 19 (53%) full-time non-union healthcare job titles had vacancies ranging from one to two budgeted positions.

As a specific example, there are eight budgeted therapist positions, at year-end all eight positions were vacant. Jail records showed that there was one position filled as of April 2022 (the individual was hired in October 2021), but they left in July 2022, leaving all eight positions vacant at year-end. Therefore, out of the eight budgeted therapist positions, only one position was filled for six months in calendar year 2022.

#### **Jail Records/Warden's Report**

During our analysis, we reviewed records provided by the Jail as well as vacancies documented in the Warden's Report. There were several errors in the Jail's records and Warden's Report. Specifically, we noted that:

- Five employees severed employment with the Jail between April and December 2022 but were not included on the initial records provided by Jail healthcare administration. Upon request, supplemental information was provided by Jail administration which included information for three of these employees.
- Eight healthcare job titles were not listed on the Warden's Report.
- The number of vacancies on the Warden's Report were incorrect for three healthcare job titles in April 2022 and for six job titles in December 2022.

We confirmed the correct information with Jail administration and included the correct numbers in the chart on pages 28 to 30.

#### **Staffing Ratio**

We have been informed by the Jail healthcare administration that the standards for corrections do not specify a staffing ratio for healthcare personnel. Staffing needs for County healthcare staff are determined based on the services that must be provided and take into consideration the Jail's population as well as the acuity level of the patients. The Jail budgets healthcare positions to include staffing for necessary services as well as for other services it would like to provide.

## Vacancies in County Healthcare Positions at the Allegheny County Jail as of December 31, 2022

	Number of Budgeted Positions	Before Adjustment for Agency Employees and County					After Adjustment					
		Filled Positions	VACANT Positions	Hired or Transfer In	Left or Transfer Out	Filled Positions	VACANT Positions	Agency Equivalent Dec. 2022	County Overtime Equivalent Dec. 2022	Adjusted Filled Positions 12/31/22	Adjusted VACANT Positions 12/31/22	
		April 2022	April 2022			12/31/22	12/31/22					
<b><u>Full-Time (FT) Union Positions</u></b>												
1 Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Specialist	5	1	4	1	1	1	4	0	0	1	4	
2 Certified Nursing Assistant	6	1	5	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	6	
3 Discharge Planner	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	
4 Licensed Practical Nurse (I)	12	6	6	1	0	7	5	6.4	0.3	13.7	-1.7	
5 Medical Assistant	9	1	8	0	0	1	8	2.2	0.2	3.4	5.6	
6 Medical Records Clerk	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	
7 Mental Health Registered Nurse	9	5	4	0	0	5	4	0	0.1	5.1	3.9	
8 Mental Health Specialist	11	6	5	0	0	6	5	0	0.3	6.3	4.7	
9 Pharmacy Technician	4	2	2	0	2	0	4	1.7	0	1.7	2.3	
10 Registered Nurse	18	9	9	2	5	6	12	7.3	0.7	14	4	
11 Substance Use Counselor	7	2	5	1	0	3	4	0	0	3	4	
12 Therapist	8	1	7	0	1	0	8	0	0	0	8	
<b>Subtotal: Full-Time Union Positions</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>41.8</b>	

<b><u>Part-Time (PT) Union Positions</u></b>											
13 Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Specialist	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
14 Licensed Practical Nurse	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	1
15 Medical Assistant	4	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3
16 Mental Health Registered Nurse	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1

## Vacancies in County Healthcare Positions at the Allegheny County Jail as of December 31, 2022

	Number of Budgeted Positions	Before Adjustment for Agency Employees and County					After Adjustment				
		Filled Positions	VACANT Positions	Hired or Transfer In	Left or Transfer Out	Filled Positions	VACANT Positions	Agency Equivalent Dec. 2022	County Overtime Equivalent Dec. 2022	Adjusted Filled Positions 12/31/22	Adjusted VACANT Positions 12/31/22
		April 2022	April 2022			12/31/22	12/31/22				
17 Mental Health Specialist	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
18 Pharmacy Technician	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
19 Registered Nurse	5	3	2	0	2	1	4	0	0	1	4
<b>Subtotal: Part-Time Union Positions</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
<b><u>Full-Time Non-Union Positions</u></b>											
20 Acting Director of Nursing	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
21 Assistant Director of Nursing	6	3	3	2	1	4	2	0.7	0	4.7	1.3
22 Clinic Manager	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
23 Deputy Health Services Administrator	4	2	2	1	0	3	1	0	0	3	1
24 Director of Mental Health	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
25 Director of Nursing	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
26 Director Substance Abuse Treatment Services	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
27 Health Services Administrator	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
28 Healthcare Administration Coordinator	5	2	3	2	0	4	1	0	0	4	1
29 Healthcare Office Manager	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
30 Healthcare Social Worker	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
31 Infectious Disease Coordinator	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
32 Infectious Disease Director	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
33 Medication Room Supervisor	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
34 Public Health Registered Nurse	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
35 Staff-Educator	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0

## Vacancies in County Healthcare Positions at the Allegheny County Jail as of December 31, 2022

	Number of Budgeted Positions	Before Adjustment for Agency Employees and County				After Adjustment					
		Filled Positions April 2022	VACANT Positions April 2022	Hired or Transfer In	Left or Transfer Out	Filled Positions 12/31/22	VACANT Positions 12/31/22	Agency Equivalent Dec. 2022	County Overtime Equivalent Dec. 2022	Adjusted Filled Positions 12/31/22	Adjusted VACANT Positions 12/31/22
36 Substance Use Case Manager	2	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
37 Substance Use Recovery Nurse Coordinator	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
38 Supply Clerk (Healthcare)	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Subtotal: Full-Time Non-Union Positions</b>	<u>35</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>0.7</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>23.7</u>	<u>11.3</u>
<b>Total for All County Positions</b>	<u><u>146</u></u>	<u><u>64</u></u>	<u><u>82</u></u>	<u><u>19</u></u>	<u><u>21</u></u>	<u><u>62</u></u>	<u><u>84</u></u>	<u><u>18.3</u></u>	<u><u>1.6</u></u>	<u><u>81.9</u></u>	<u><u>64.1</u></u>
						42%	58%			56%	44%

(1) Although the adjusted vacancy is negative, and it appears agency licensed practice nurses worked more shifts than needed to cover the vacancies, we noted that one County employee did not work at all in December 2022, and another County employee was off for almost half of the month.

Source: Records and Information provided by Jail administration and temporary agency invoices.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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#### Exit Interviews and Resignation Letters

Based on information provided by the Controller’s Office Payroll Division 25 County healthcare employees either resigned, retired, or were terminated in 2022 as shown below:

- 14 (56%) Healthcare Employees Resigned
- 9 (36%) Healthcare Employees were Terminated
- 2 (8%) Healthcare Employees Retired

When we compared this information to the records provided by the Jail, the results showed the Jail’s records were incomplete. We noted two of the 25 (8%) individuals were not included in the Jail’s records.

The Jail provided resignation letters and exit interviews for nine healthcare employees that separated from their employment with the Jail (eight resignation letters and five exit interviews) in calendar year 2022. We reviewed the five exit forms provided by the Jail. The forms contain a section listing 15 reasons why the employee is leaving and directs the employee to select all reasons contributing to their decision to leave.

<b>Reasons Healthcare Employees Left Employment at the Jail Based on Exit Forms Completed by the Staff</b>	
<b><u>Reason</u></b>	<b><u># Medical Employees</u></b>
Dissatisfied with Management	4
Work Hours	3
Family Responsibilities	1
Health Concerns	0
Personal	0
Advancement Opportunities	3
Better Job Opportunities	1
Relationship with Co-Workers	1
Further Education	1
Joined Military	0
Better Benefits	1
Salary	3
Job Eliminated	0
Relocation	1
Other	2

*Source: Records provided by Jail administration*

### **III. Findings and Recommendations**

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Based on the above information, dissatisfaction with management was the top reason related to medical personnel leaving employment at the Jail with 4 out of 5 individuals (80%) indicating this contributed to their decision to leave. Healthcare personnel also wrote down other reasons for leaving on the exit interview form or in their resignation letter which included toxic work environment, lack of staffing, extreme workload, lack of training, management more concerned with trying to fix people and not the problem as well as unfair security measures among management and different for staff.

The Jail did not provide a resignation letter for six of the 14 (43%) individuals that resigned. We also noted that exit interviews are not conducted with all employees who resign. Of the exit interviews that are conducted (five of the 25 employees that left), which is a small percentage (20%), nothing is done with the information that is documented on these forms to make improvements at the Jail.

**Cause:**

Based on our testing and analysis it appears that the Jail is having a difficult time filling healthcare positions, as well as maintaining healthcare staff, due to the toxic work environment, lack of training provided to staff, and the extreme workload. We noted that of the 14 County employee resignations in 2022, the average length of time employed at the jail was 15 months which ranged from 3.5 years to a low of 43 days.

In addition, the Jail must adhere to strict security requirements for everyone's safety, therefore, certain healthcare employees are not permitted to bring cell phones into the Jail. These restrictions may be perceived as an inconvenience that prospective candidates are not willing to work under, especially when there are jobs available without these restrictions. In addition, certain jobs in the private sector, such as therapists, can perform telehealth visits (providers deliver care without an in-person visit) and work from home, something that is not currently offered by the Jail.

**Effect:**

Based on our analysis it appears that there is no indication that hiring conditions are improving and the Jail remains grossly understaffed. The lack of filling healthcare vacancies cost taxpayers over a million dollars in 2022 due to the hiring of employees through temporary agencies to help fill in the gaps in the healthcare staffing. The majority of the vacant full-time union positions, that are not filled by temporary agencies, relate to mental and behavioral health services. This can pose a risk of harm to the Jail's population as well as the correctional officers and healthcare staff.

### III. Findings and Recommendations

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The mixture of temporary and permanent staff also creates low morale among permanent staffing.

**Recommendations:** We recommend that Jail management:

- Focus on hiring health care employees by offering appropriate incentives and implementing other vigorous hiring strategies. This could include offering telehealth visits when the situation allows as well as compensation incentives, and flexible work schedules.
  - Use available data, and expand current data collection, to prioritize medical staffing vacancies that most significantly impact operations.
  - Work with Nursing Schools and Colleges to attract new hires as well as to provide internships at the Jail.
- Use the suggestions, if appropriate, provided through exit forms to improve working conditions and increase morale. Management needs to listen from the ground up (people that are actually working on the floor) instead of making the decisions at the administrative level.
- Focus on creating a professional work environment in which individuals can ensure consistent delivery of quality patient care.
- Implement an electronic scheduling system to assist with healthcare staffing and scheduling.
- Implement controls to ensure the healthcare position vacancies presented in the Warden's Report include all health care job titles and the data presented is accurate.

**Management's Response:**

The Warden's response begins on page 37.

## **IV. Conclusion**

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In a 24/7 operation such as the Jail, it is nearly impossible to eliminate the need for overtime. The goal is to reduce overtime to a reasonable level where COs are not forced to consistently stay and work overtime after their shift. Our audit revealed that there are not enough COs available to work regular time at the Jail facility. In addition, call-offs and medical leave further contributed to the amount of overtime COs must work. Therefore, with an adequate number of COs on staff to cover the necessary shifts plus a reasonable estimated number of call-offs, overtime could be drastically reduced and limited to short-shifts and instances that cannot be easily predicted such as medical leave, administrative leaves, etc.

We noted numerous vacancies in the healthcare staffing. Although the Jail uses staffing agencies to try to meet minimum operations, the Jail needs to better focus on offering incentives to make these jobs appeal to more medical staff, such as flexible schedules, telehealth visits, improved professional working environment, etc. In turn the Jail would be able to better provide for the needs of incarcerated and possibly provide additional programs and services. Based on our analysis, it appears the Jail is grossly understaffed.

Overall, the Jail needs to develop an overall strategy designed to address these issues in order to achieve the best results for the incarcerated, jail staff, and taxpayers.

**Approximation of Required Number of Correctional Officers With Short-Shifts**

**Estimate of Total Hours Needed per Year**

	Estimated Full-Shift COs Needed				Estimated Hours
	1	2	3	Day	
Sunday	89	89	71	249	1,992
Monday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Tuesday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Wednesday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Thursday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Friday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Saturday	89	89	71	249	1,992
	<u>Total for Week</u>			1,878	15,024 (1)
Estimated Full-Shift Hours per Week					15,024
Estimated Short-Shift Hours per Week					1,144 (2)
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Week					<u>16,168</u>
* Weeks in a Year					52
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Year					<u>840,736</u>

**Estimated Hours Available per Correction Officer**

Hours per Week	40
* Weeks in a Year	52
Hours per Year	<u>2,080</u>
Less:	
Average Vacation Hours Used per Year	248 (3)
Average Sick Hours Used per Year	83 (3)
Training Hours per Year	80 (4)
	<u>411</u>
Estimated Hours Available per Officer	1,669
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Year	840,736
/ Estimated Hours Available per Officer	<u>1,669</u>
Correction Officers Required	<u>504</u>

(1) Estimate provided by the Jail

(2) Estimate based on short-shifts identified on the Roll Call Book (The Jail does not currently employ part-time COs, so we converted the short-shifts to 8-hour shifts)

(3) Average number of hours based on JDE payroll records for 2021

(4) Number of hours of Training required per year according to the Jail

**Approximation of Required Number of Correctional Officers Without Short-Shifts**

<b>Estimate of Total Hours Needed per Year</b>					
	<u>Estimated Full-Shift COs Needed</u>				Estimated Hours
	Shift 1	Shift 2	Shift 3	Day	
Sunday	89	89	71	249	1,992
Monday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Tuesday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Wednesday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Thursday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Friday	109	96	71	276	2,208
Saturday	89	89	71	249	1,992
	<u>Total for Week</u>			1,878	15,024 (1)
Estimated Full-Shift Hours per Week					15,024
Estimated Short-Shift Hours per Week					0 (2)
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Week					<u>15,024</u>
* Weeks in a Year					52
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Year					<u>781,248</u>
<b>Estimated Hours Available per Correction Officer</b>					
Hours per Week					40
* Weeks in a Year					52
Hours per Year					<u>2,080</u>
Less:					
Average Vacation Hours Used per Year					248 (3)
Average Sick Hours Used per Year					83 (3)
Training Hours per Year					80 (4)
					<u>411</u>
Estimated Hours Available per Officer					1,669
Total Estimated Hours Needed per Year					781,248
/ Estimated Hours Available per Officer					<u>1,669</u>
Correction Officers Required					<u>468</u>
Weekly Hours Required for Short-Shifts					749
* Weeks per year					52
Annual Overtime Hours for Short-Shifts					<u>38,948</u>
Average Overtime Hours per Correctional Officer					83

(1) Estimate provided by the Jail

(2) Removed short-shifts, assuming these would continue to be staffed with overtime

(3) Average number of hours based on JDE payroll records for 2021

(4) Number of hours of Training required per year according to the Jail

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

AUG 23 2023

August 23, 2023

RECEIVED

The Honorable Corey O'Connor  
Office of the County Controller  
104 County Courthouse  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Controller O'Connor:

Thank you for providing a draft copy of your office's Audit Report on Staffing at the Allegheny County Jail for the Period January 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022. Before responding to the individual findings and recommendations, we think it's important that the conversation regarding staffing be put into context.

Organizations and companies across the country are currently facing unprecedented challenges trying to find enough workers to fill open jobs. That's certainly the case here locally as well. The county currently has a 50-year low unemployment rate of 3.3%. There are over 45,000 open jobs with businesses throughout the county. The county government is no exception.

Even without that scenario, correctional administrators have grappled with severe workforce challenges. A study by the National Institute of Justice in 2019 found that correctional officer vacancy rates in some prisons approached 50% with annual correctional officer turnover rates as high as 55%. The Allegheny County Jail has also experienced challenges in recruiting, hiring, and retaining staff, all issues only exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. And we continue to compete with over 100 area police agencies and surrounding county and state correctional agencies. In talking with our colleagues, we know that many of them also grapple with difficulties in employee hiring and retention.

We have not been idle, waiting for something to change. We have hired a Talent Acquisition Specialist. Working with the county administration, the residency requirement for jail employees was lifted and employees receive parking reimbursement.



ORLANDO L. HARPER, WARDEN  
**ALLEGHENY COUNTY JAIL**  
950 SECOND AVENUE • PITTSBURGH, PA 15219  
PHONE (412) 350-2000 • (412) 350-2032  
WWW.ALLEGHENYCOUNTY.US

Recruitment of healthcare staff has even greater challenges as we are centered in a medical mecca in Pittsburgh. There are many healthcare agencies within Allegheny County that offer healthcare employees substantial bonuses, remote work from home options, and flexible work hours. The county has previously initiated bonuses for registered nurse and licensed practical nurse positions, but found that the incentive did not offer any relief to the workload or need.

The jail has a marketing campaign aimed at increasing awareness of opportunities available at the facility. We continue to advertise job openings through a variety of channels. We have hosted job fairs and participated in others, including in-person and virtual opportunities. We frequently host law enforcement-oriented classes from area colleges and universities and use those visits as a tool to highlight careers in corrections.

Recognizing that our testing process could be a hindrance to employment, we worked with Human Resources to alter the steps as well as the frequency of the process. Cadet classes are held more often (six classes were held in 2021 and five were held in 2022), and applications and testing are done on a rolling basis. This has allowed us to continue recruiting new officers.

The management response to each of the recommendations set forth in the audit follows:

#### Finding # 1

Recommendation 1 and 2: Implement an electronic scheduling system and conduct an overall analysis to re-evaluate Roll Call books and CO posts.

The jail administration has been researching electronic systems that can address our needs. Similarly, review of roll call books is done on an ongoing basis to determine necessary posts at the jail. Eliminating posts requires negotiation with the union.

Recommendation 3: Immediately recruit new COs.

As previously noted, we continue to utilize a variety of tools and resources to recruit, hire and retain correctional officers. These efforts have included advertisements in neighboring counties, including specific, targeted digital advertising around job fairs and career opportunities. The most recent spend was almost \$7,000 and reached audiences in Westmoreland, Washington, Butler, and Beaver, among others.

Recommendation 4: Adopt a more flexible scheduling model for COs as well as input into decisions that affect their work experience.

We will continue to work on a model that meets the needs of the facility and the individuals we serve. This includes consideration of 12-hour shifts that were effective during COVID in addressing staffing issues. This change would require union agreement and so their members are at the table for conversations about changes to the work experience.

Beyond conversations with the union management, all employees can also make recommendations and suggestions through our townhall and roll-call meetings, all managers at the ACJ have an open-door policy with suggestions and recommendations welcomed.

Recommendation 5: Work with union and current COs to identify incentives.

We have met with the union, and it has provided suggestions to attract employees. We continue to engage to find amenable solutions for all parties.

Recommendation 6: Use suggestions from exit interviews to develop change.

If the exit interviews provide meaningful suggestions to improve morale at the ACJ, we will implement the suggestions.

## Finding # 2

Before moving to responses to the recommendations, we would note that healthcare services are misrepresented in the introduction in terms of services provided, frequency and location of services, and levels of care available within the facility. Further, the Behavioral Assessment Unit is not a service that is offered by the jail – it is a department of Pre-Trial Services.

Recommendation 1: Offer appropriate incentives and implement vigorous hiring strategies.

In addition to that which is addressed, we would note that the audit did not include any measurement of recruitment efforts or data over time in its scope. Without that effort, the recommendations are made in a vacuum and erroneously make the assumption that there is “no indication that hiring conditions are improving.”

An overview of healthcare specific staffing strategies that have been explored, implemented, or exhausted include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hiring of Healthcare Office Manager, with a major responsibility to manage healthcare recruitment and onboarding.
- Hiring an additional Quality Improvement Manager with assignments on employee engagement.
- Hiring a second Staffing Educator to support staffing development initiatives.
- We have increased relationships with higher education institutions to engage student healthcare professionals to create interest in the lesser-known field of correctional healthcare. Information regarding this process was not gathered during the audit, though it appeared as a recommendation.
- We have expanded contracts with staffing agencies to three new agencies.
- We expanded required holiday and weekend shifts agency staff must provide to support the workload burden on county staff.

- We implemented referral bonuses for successful county hires, where no healthcare staff participated.
- We have become an approved facility with the Substance use disorder Treatment And Recovery (STAR) Loan Repayment Program to support being an employer of choice.
- We have presented labor management and budget proposals to include flexible scheduling and wage increases for county employees, which were unsuccessful through the contract provisions.
- To address the recommendation to permit work from home in any jail job class, it is not a policy exclusive to the jail to prohibit this schedule structure.

Recommendation 2: Use suggestions from exit interviews to develop change.

If the exit interviews provide meaningful suggestions to improve morale at the ACJ, we will implement the suggestions.

Recommendation 3: Focus on creating a professional work environment.

It is mandatory that all ACJ employees conduct themselves in a professional matter. This is communicated to employees through roll call and townhall meetings and open-door communication with supervisory staff.

Recommendation 4: Implement an electronic scheduling system.

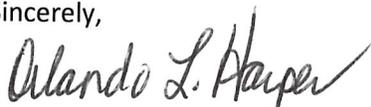
The jail administration has been researching electronic systems that can address our needs.

Recommendation 5: Implement controls that ensure the position vacancies in the Warden's Report are accurate.

We have already outlined and implemented a corrective action plan to address the Healthcare Vacancy Report accuracy. You will have noticed a new format and complete revision of the report beginning in the Warden's Report for April 2023.

Again, thank you for providing a draft copy of your office's Audit Report on Staffing. We hope that our responses and discussion regarding staffing in context gives a more complete picture of the challenges and action steps that have been taken to date.

Sincerely,



Orlando L. Harper  
Allegheny County Jail  
Warden